

December Newsletter

FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S DESK

The Advent Season is here and what an exciting time of the year this is! Our school has been very busy with activities that fully celebrate the meaning of Advent and prepare us for the birth of our Lord and savior Jesus Christ. Members of the Sacred Heart Stewards Service Club have been collecting money for needy children in Selma Alabama, a project that has been a tradition during Advent at Sacred Heart Church. The name of their project is Change for Change. They decorated coffee cans and placed them in each classroom, in the cafeteria and in the office. On Fridays, they bring the cans to Mass during Offertory. So far they have collected \$578.75. The Sacred Heart Stewards are also making holiday cards for service men and women in war areas as well as special "baskets" made of Christmas cards for people who are in convalescent homes. Small goodies will be put into them.

On another Advent project, our whole school prepared placemats in Art class. These placemats will be sent to the St. Vincent De Paul Soup Kitchen to be used during the Holidays. Also as an Advent project, we have continued with our very successful food drive to benefit Groton Human Services. To complement it, the 5th graders have made very nice Christmas ornaments that they sold on Thursday, December 18th. The money raised will be donated to Groton Human Services. And last but not least, the SHS Parents Guild organized their traditional Light the Tree fundraiser to help a school needy family for Christmas. And they decorate our school too! Thank you for all your beautiful messages. All of these projects demonstrate the incredible generosity of our school community. Thank you, Sacred Heart, for caring so much about the needy, the elderly and the lonely.

Besides our active charitable work, our school has enjoyed a variety of performances, among other activities. On Thursday, December 4th, our school's Children Chorus, under the direction of Mrs. Barbara Billings and accompanied in the piano by Mrs. Jeaninne Lamothe, gave a concert at the Mary Elizabeth Nursing Home. They had two other performances in our school on December 11th. This time, they shared the stage with our beginners and advanced school band under the direction of Mr. John Listorti. And on December 17th, we had our traditional Lessons and Carols in the Church, indeed a feast for the senses and the spirit. And finally, our students took care of their Christmas shopping at the SHS Santa Shop organized by our Parents Guild. Through this active celebration of Advent, may we learn to walk as children of the light, doing what is good, right and faithful.

Middle School News: The 6th graders were the winners of the Middle School Homework Challenge for the month of November. They celebrated with a pajama day on Wednesday, December 17th. A total of 20 Middle School students received a Principal's Dress Down Pass for a perfect homework record (four more than in October and ten more than in September). They are Megan Bosetti, Michelle Chapman, Celine Harris, Elizabeth Jennerwein, Briana Kleiner, Ellie McCarthy, Joey Warmus, Justin Bell, Morgan Gagne, Brigid Horan, Katie Bosetti, Victor Calle, Justin Cavitt, Joe Granatosky, Meredith Haluga, Katie MacCarthy, Iesha Preston, Julia Scott and Coriene Smith. Congratulations! I would also like to congratulate all the Middle School students that made it to the Honor Roll.

We have just started to develop a Library Sciences curriculum for the Middle School. Now that Mrs. Hamanka is back teaching Computer Sciences, Mrs. Sardar is working with the Middle School Students in the library. We are in the process of installing 10 computers so that Mrs. Sardar can teach the students how to use Internet resources for schoolwork.

Elementary School News: On Monday, November 17th, our 5th and 6th grade students went on a field trip to the State Capitol in Hartford. They had a great time.

Other News: We have made some changes to the school website that make it more pleasant and easier to navigate. This is a work in progress with many more ideas underway. Please, let us know what you think.

Regarding our Athletics program, our basketball season is in full swing and going great. Our Girls JV team and Girls Varsity have won both of their games and Boys team have won three games and lost one. A pep rally took place Friday, December 12th, 2008 at 2:00 PM in the cafeteria. It was great fun! We announced our new mascot, the Crusaders. About two months ago, our Athletic Board brought to my attention their concern that our previous mascot, the Huskies, did not adequately represent the Catholic/Christian identity of our school. Both, Fr. Dariusz and I gave our consent for the change of the mascot through a process that consulted our Middle School students in the context of a contest. Our students were asked to submit a mascot name, write an essay explaining why they thought it would be a good name for our school mascot, and also submit a logo. We were looking for something distinctive and unique and that could represent our Catholic identity and values in a manner consistent with our mission. When presented with this challenge, our Middle School students were extremely excited and eager to participate. The essays and the logos exceeded our expectations. The Athletic Board asked Fr. Dariusz and I to select the finalists which were then submitted to the Middle School students for their vote. They selected the name Crusaders, submitted by Justin Bell, a seventh grade student and basketball team member. Congratulations, Justin, on your wonderful accomplishment!

Our community is always active with fundraisers to benefit our school. We would like to thank Knights of Columbus for donating \$1,000.00 for our science program. This donation came from the money raised at their Oktoberfest dinner-dance last October 25th in the cafeteria. And our Parents Guild is very busy with the organization of their second big fundraiser, the Mardi Gras Dinner Dance, scheduled for Saturday, February 7, 2009 at the Groton Motor Inn. Tickets are \$50.00 per person. Forms to order tickets are available at the school office. This activity will include the traditional Basket Gala. This year all you have to do is donate \$5.00 for your child's classroom basket. The Guild will do the shopping for the classrooms this year after the teachers have selected their themes. This will assure proper receipts that are required for the permits.

As you can see, our school continues to be a wonderful learning community where our students get more than an education. They get a formation at so many levels and in an environment centered in our Catholic tradition and Christian values. During this early winter, when days are so short, we remember that once we were in darkness, but now we live in the light of the Lord. We are becoming more excited by the minute for the coming of Christmas. We ask our Lord Jesus Christ to come and fill us with His light, so that we may live in peace with one another. Merry Christmas to all and may the New Year be all that you hope and dream!

In Christ's love,

Dr. Calle